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*Community Planning, Zoning, Site Planning and Design, Environmental Impact Studies and Traffic Planning*

## M E M O

**FROM: Shuster-Turner**

**DATE: March 26, 2013**

**SUBJECT: Proposed Midtown Target Area**

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The Scope of Work for the Comprehensive Plan requires that Shuster-Turner identify:

1. Those areas of the City that are stable and should be protected.
2. Areas that have been the subject of past planning efforts and land use strategies that are still valid.
3. Areas that exhibit land use conflicts, concerns or opportunities for which plans have not been developed or for which there are conflicting plans. These areas should be the primary focus of the comprehensive plan effort.

Our budget for the Comprehensive Plan is limited and requires an efficient and focused plan of action. In order to gain momentum, the following approach to establish the next phase of our work program is suggested.

While we cannot ignore the Uptown and Rondout areas, it seems clear that the most promising target area is Midtown, for the following reasons:

1. Uptown and the Rondout have been the subject of extensive recent planning efforts which still appear valid. They need encouragement and, perhaps, some tweaking, but our time and budget do not allow for re-inventing the wheel, even if it were appropriate.
2. The Central Broadway corridor is certainly acknowledged as a problem. It is obvious and unavoidable for anyone who lives or visits the City. Many of the online survey comments address conditions here and the deficiencies in this area

were cited frequently during the recent SWOT exercise. The last studies of this area, that we are aware of, are the plans prepared in the 70s.

- 3.** There are a variety of current issues and opportunities that can be pursued now, including the following that will benefit by being part of a comprehensive planning process. Furthermore, economic and social activity generated in this core area will have spin-off benefits for the surrounding Mid-town neighborhoods.
  - a.** There is impetus for creating an artist/cultural district to include UPAC, the proposed artist housing in the Lace Factory, the existing studios in the Shirt Factory, and several other art-related businesses in the same area.
  - b.** The future of Kingston Hospital is up in the air as the Health Alliance pursues a plan to consolidate the two City hospitals.
  - c.** It appears likely that the hospitals will consolidate at Benedictine Hospital across the street from Sophie Finn Elementary School, generating some changes there.
  - d.** Kingston High School upgrades have been considered for a number of years and a plan will likely be agreed upon before too long.
  - e.** An annex of Ulster County Community College (UCCC) is proposed for the recently closed Sophie Finn Elementary School which is immediately behind the Kingston High School.
  - f.** A number of major city facilities are still located on Broadway – City Hall, the YMCA, UPAC, the Midtown Neighborhood Center.
  - g.** The City is pursuing relocation of the Police Station to Broadway in the former Bank of America building
  - h.** The site of the former Kings Inn is at a strategic location and offers opportunities for redevelopment.
- 4.** Based on the above, we have delineated a suggested target area for planning on the attached map. If the Committee is in agreement with this approach, we will prepare a scope of work that will comprise a major element of Phases 2 and 3 of the Comprehensive Plan.

# MID-TOWN TARGET AREA

